DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 451 148 SP 039 818

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TITLE Documenting and Verifying Best Practice in Elementary Physical Education.

PUB DATE 2000-03-00

NOTE 11p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance (Orlando, FL, March 21-25, 2000).

PUB TYPE Reports - Research (143) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150) -- Tests/Questionnaires (160)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.

DESCRIPTORS Elementary Education; *Interpersonal Competence; Observation; *Physical Education; Physical Fitness; *Program Evaluation; *Psychomotor Skills; Scheduling; Student Evaluation; Teacher Evaluation

ABSTRACT

This paper describes a 1998 evaluation conducted by one Texas school district of its K-5 physical education (PE) program. The director of PE developed a plan for gathering information on scheduling; student performance (motor skills, fitness, and social skills); and teachers' use of best instructional practices. Teachers assessed student performance on locomotor skills, cardiorespiratory efficiency, upper body strength, and abdominal strength and endurance. Teachers and students completed a report on social skills use during class. Information about scheduling and minutes allotted for PE was gathered at each school. Consultants observed classes and collected data on use of best practices during instruction. This paper describes: goals of the best practices observation instrument; steps involved in developing the observation instrument; identification of domains of developmentally appropriate practices included; rubric development; the consultant's commendations; the consultant's recommendations; and the PE director's report. Overall, classes that had daily PE and lower teacher-student ratios scored higher on student performance measures and the best practices observation instrument than did those with less consistent scheduling and higher teacher-student ratios. The school board responded by hiring four additional specialists and encouraging daily PE scheduling. The observation instrument and related descriptors are attached. (SM)

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Documenting and Verifying Best Practice in Elementary Physical Education

Presented at the AAHPERD Annual Convention
Orlando, Florida
March 23, 2000

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Round Rock ISD's School Board Special Area Program Evaluation

In the fall of 1998 the Round Rock Independent School District Board of Trustees directed the district's Division of Instruction to conduct an evaluation of the K-5 art, music, and physical education programs. The purpose of the evaluation was to obtain information and data regarding these programs and provide recommendations for the staffing and delivery of instruction. Dr. Barbara Logan, the director of physical education developed a plan for gathering information on scheduling, student performance (motor skills, fitness, and social skills), and use of best instructional practices by teachers. Teachers assessed student performance on locomotor skills (motor performance), cardiorespiratory efficiency, upper body strength, and abdominal strength and endurance (fitness). The teachers and students also completed a report on social skills used during class. Dr. Logan gathered information about scheduling and minutes allotted for physical education at each school. Consultants were hired to observe classes and collect data on the use of "Best Practices" during instruction. This presentation displays the observation instrument and outlines the process used for gathering information on best practices.

The consultants utilized an observation instrument that had been developed for the purpose of aiding teachers in assessing their own work and in educating principals and parents about what to look for in quality physical education classes. The following outline describes the development of the "Best Practices" observation instrument.

"Best Practices" Observation Instrument attempted to:

- ✓Focus on indicators of developmentally appropriate practices- "Best Practices"
- ✓Be user friendly
- ✓Be appropriate for principal walk-throughs
- ✓Help people picture quality physical education

The steps included in the development of the observation instrument were:

- ✓Identification of domains and indicators to consider within each domain
- ✓Creation of Rubric-"AIM" with descriptors for each level
- ✓Field testing- reliability check
- ✓Use in Round Rock Audit
- ✓Refinement

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Identification of domains of Developmentally Appropriate Practices included:

- ✓Physical Environment
- ✓Climate
- ✓Management
- ✓Activity Time
- ✓Instruction

Rubric Development

Descriptors were created for each level

A = Admirable
I = Included
M = Missed today

The labels were changed to 0-2 in Round Rock ISD analysis to allow for averaging the scores across domains for each school.

The three consultants each visited 7-8 elementary school campuses and observed 30 minutes of one physical education class. They used the "Best Practices" Observation Instrument to record indicators in each of the five domains listed above. The data from all the observations were summarized and a report was written based on the findings of the observations.

The Consultant's Commendations included:

- ✓ Physical education obviously valued based on facilities and equipment available
  - -there was enough equipment for all students
  - -the environments clean and neat
  - -telephones and computers were available for all teachers
- ✓ Teachers were enthusiastic and served active role models
- ✓ Observations indicated most teachers were teaching and students were learning
- ✓ Many schools had daily physical education –
- ✓ High expectations for behavior & learning were evident
- ✓ Most teachers were in tune with local, state, national guidelines.

Consultant's Report made the following recommendations

- ✓Continue to move in current direction
- ✓Most classes were excellent, some did not exemplify "best practices"- attention should focus on improving these programs
- ✓Elementary physical education specialists should be employed, since secondary specialists had different skills
- ✓Provide inservice training since some classes used developmentally inappropriate activities.
- ✓Technology support should be continued to help monitor learning and for communication

✓Increase class time from 25-30 minutes (or more) --25 minute classes included too much time
in transition
✓Limit one class per facility because crowding decreased the quality of learning

Physical Education Director's Report--The Consultant's report based on the observations was compiled with the other information gathered (which included scheduling and student performance) and summarized identifying the following information for the school board.
Analysis of relationships among:

- ✓Scheduling frequency & teacher/student ratios
- ✓Student performance
- ✓Observations of "best practices"

The analysis found that the classes that had daily physical education and lower teacher/student ratios scored higher on student performance and the Best Practices Observation Instrument than those that had less consistent scheduling and higher student/teacher ratios. As a result when the school board was presented with this report a request was made for daily physical education scheduling and additional teachers to lower the student/teacher ratio for schools who were in need. The school board responded by encouraging daily physical education scheduling and by hiring four additional specialists.

This evaluation project demonstrated that the "Best Practices" Observation Instrument is practical to use and provides useful information. Furthermore, careful collection, analysis and presentation of appropriate data can make a difference in program support.

As a result of the success of this project the "Best Practices" Observation Instrument has been introduced to principals and teachers in additional districts. Teachers are encouraged to use it for self-evaluation and to guide professional development objectives. Principals are advised to use it on walk-through assessments to assist them in identifying specific aspects of "Best Practices" being demonstrated in the lesson.

Attached is a copy of the "Best Practices" Observation Instrument and the related descriptors

School_____Grade_____ Time In_____ Time Out_____ Date_____

Best Practices Observation Instrument for Physical Education

Summary Recording Sheet

AIM High for a Quality Elementary Physical Education Program

A= Admirable, I=Included, M= Missed today

Environment

_____Visually inviting

_____Helps communicate goals, instructional information

_____Behavior expectations clearly posted

_____Includes all students (diverse images: girls/boys, ethnic groups, disabilities, variety of activities)

Climate

_____Positive expectations for behavior and learning evident

_____Students are greeted

_____Students are engaged, challenged, successful, and enjoy activity.

_____Teachers demonstrate respect when speaking with students

_____Teacher reinforces and encourages appropriate behavior

_____Student's positive self-esteem is fostered

_____Students demonstrate respect when speaking with teachers and other students

_____Students take responsibility for their own appropriate behavior-leadership roles encouraged

_____Safety standards are evident in environment & activity

Class is efficiently managed

_____Class begins in an efficient, organized manner

_____Students are dressed appropriately for physical activity

_____Obvious routines make group organization efficient

_____Obvious routines make equipment distribution & collection efficient

_____Students get into activity quickly

_____Teacher monitors students during activity

_____Students not able to actively participate are engaged in productive activities

_____Teacher has an effective behavior management plan and implements it as needed

Activity Time

_____Warmups are appropriate and worthwhile

_____Where appropriate each student has his/her own appropriate equipment

_____Tasks allow students to work at different levels

_____Each student gets many successful/appropriate practice trials

_____Moderate to vigorous physical activity is included

_____Each student is physically active at least 50% of total class time

_____Small sided group games are used rather than whole class games

Instruction

_____Lesson objective is clearly stated, reasons why provided

_____Instruction is concise

_____Information provided is correct and important

_____Information is linked to other learning

_____Feedback is appropriate and related to cues of lesson

_____Stereotyping remarks/sarcasm avoided

_____Language is inclusive

_____Obvious progression in lesson, lesson appears part of a larger progression

_____Cues for performance are highlighted

_____Demonstrations for skills/drills/games are provided

_____Safety highlighted (emotional & physical)

_____Learning reviewed/tomorrow previewed/compliments given

_____Encouragement provided for activity outside of class

_____Evidence that learning is taking place; accountability systems evident

Comments:

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School_____Grade_____ Time In_____ Time Out_____ Date_____

Best Practices Observation Instrument for Physical Education
AIM High for a Quality Physical Education Program

What a visitor should experience walking through a quality physical education class.
A=Admirable, I=Included, M=Missed Today

Environment

____Visually inviting
- A. Multiple, colorful, appropriate posters; neat and organized environment
- I. Posters and some organization is evident
- M. Posters not in evidence; Cluttered, dirty, not organized for the day's activities

____Helps communicate goals, instructional information
- A. All information written so it can be seen; objectives for the day; cues posted
- I. All information written so it can be seen; objectives or cues posted
- M. No evidence

____Behavior expectations clearly posted
- A. Prominently posted; clearly stated; communicated often; promotes student success and responsibility
- I. Expectations posted; clearly stated; promote student success and responsibility
- M. None posted or not stated or inappropriate for physical education

____Includes all students (diverse images: girls/boys, ethnic groups, disabilities, variety of activities)
- A. Reinforces diversity in gender, ethnic group, disabilities or activity
- I. Highlights one area of diversity: gender, ethnic group, or activity
- M. No evidence of valuing diversity

Climate

____Positive expectations for behavior and learning evident
- A. Stated by teacher several times when appropriate and posted in multiple ways
- I. Stated by teacher and posted; stated more than once but not posted
- M. Not stated

____Students are greeted
- A. Individual greetings, smiles, enthusiasm, sincere
- I. General greeting
- M. No greeting given

____Students are engaged, challenged, successful, and enjoy activity
- A. Students enjoy practicing activities; experience enjoyment in physical activity; express personal satisfaction in their accomplishments
- I. Students practice/participate without repeated prodding from teacher; activity is developmentally appropriate to facilitate challenge/success
- M. Students are off-task; not successful; not challenged

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School_____Grade_____ Time In_____ Time Out_____ Date_____

(Climate continued)

____Teachers demonstrate respect when speaking with students

A. Tone of voice and expressions used are consistently courteous and genuine; no opportunity missed; seen from beginning to end of lesson

I. Some demonstrations of respectful tone and expressions while interacting with students; some opportunities missed

M. Sarcasm, negative, or demeaning statements used

____Teacher reinforces and encourages appropriate behavior

A. Consistently celebrates appropriate behavior; uses a variety of ways to demonstrate approval and encouragement that impact student behavior

I. Encouragement and reinforcement techniques are moderate; some opportunities missed

M. Techniques have little or no impact on student behaviors; or not evident

____Student's positive self-esteem is fostered

A. Activities provide consistent opportunities for students to be successful throughout the lesson; teams selected appropriately

I. Non-threatening environment; performance preserves student dignity; positive, specific, corrective feedback given; some opportunities missed

M. Several opportunities missed or negative statements used to inform students of their performance

____Students demonstrate respect when speaking with teachers and other students

A. Consistent respect demonstrated in all interactions; great variety of interactions; highly positive and genuine, no yelling

I. Consistent respect demonstrated in all interactions; obviously a daily expectation

M. Respect irregularly demonstrated in class interactions; not an obvious class expectation; little variety in interactions with limited impact

____Students take responsibility for their own appropriate behavior; leadership roles encouraged

A. Student leadership and responsibility observed; routines are seamless; use own initiative to encourage peer compliance

I. Students willingly comply; seen from beginning to end of lesson

M. Consistent teacher intervention necessary for student compliance to expected behaviors

____Safety standards are evident in environment & activity

A. Routines that reinforce safety are evident (posted) and stated; students take responsibility for their own safety; activity is appropriate for the space available and student ability

I. Safety procedures are stated, not posted; teacher addresses problems; activity is matched for space available or adapted to student ability

M. Routines are not clear or not evident; activity does not promote the welfare of the student; no safety standards posted or are inappropriate for physical education

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School_____Grade_____ Time In_____ Time Out_____ Date_____

Class is efficiently managed

____Class begins in an efficient, organized manner

A. All students listening and attending to instruction; protocols in place; routines seamless from beginning to end of lesson

I. Equipment is ready; protocols in place, students listening and attending to instruction

M. Teacher intervention is necessary to get students grouped and to distribute equipment; instructional time is wasted giving lengthy directions; redirecting students; students fooling around

____Students are dressed appropriately for physical activity

A. All students have on appropriate shoes and clothing for activity (no sandals, boots, shoes with elevated soles or heels; no hazardous jewelry)

I. Most students have on appropriate shoes; no clothing that restricts movement

M. Several students have on shoes, clothing, or jewelry that is potentially hazardous to them or others

____Obvious routines make group organization efficient

A. Protocols for organizing students are efficient and evident from beginning to end of lesson

I. Protocols are evident for only part of the class; some instructional time is used for organizing students

M. Protocols are not efficient or not in place

____Obvious routines make equipment distribution & collection efficient

A. Protocols for distributing and collecting equipment are efficient and evident from beginning to end of lesson

I. Protocols are evident for only part of the class; some instructional time is used for distributing and collecting equipment

M. Protocols are not efficient, disorganized, disruptive to the class, or not in place

____Students get into activity quickly

A. Teacher instructions are concise and effective; transitions are smooth and quickly achieved from one activity to another

I. Organizational planning is evident but not all transitions are smooth or quickly achieved

M. Obvious lack of organizational planning creating disorganization; loss of instructional time

____Teacher monitors students during activity

A. Scans; back to the wall; adjusts position often; makes adjustments when necessary

I. Observes and makes some adjustments (i.e. changing tasks)

M. Not actively attending to class

____Students not able to actively participate are engaged in productive activities

A. Productive activities suitable for the activity planned and implemented

I. Students are involved in an alternative activity

M. Students sit out and are not engaged in productive activities

____Teacher has an effective behavior management plan and implements it as needed

A. Expectations are stated, posted in several places, consistently and effectively implemented

I. Expectations are posted but not stated; generally implemented; some missed opportunities or implemented inconsistently

M. No evidence

Activity Time

____Warmups are appropriate and worthwhile

A. Warm-ups are designed to improve the skill, coordination, and/or fitness levels of students; related to the lesson objectives and activity

I. Warm-ups are developmentally appropriate

M. Warm-ups compromise body alignment and place unnecessary stress on the joints and muscles

____Where appropriate each student has his/her own appropriate equipment

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School_____Grade_____ Time In_____ Time Out_____ Date_____

A. Equipment facilitates student achievement (size and weight appropriate) and enables students to have maximum practice opportunities; space organized for maximum safety
I. Equipment allows numerous practice opportunities; space allows students to work safely
M. Lack of equipment limits the practice opportunities

____Tasks allow students to work at different levels

A. Practice activities are at increasing or decreasing level of difficulty to keep students interested or involved; students choose their level
I. Practice activities are the same for all students
M. Limited practice activities restrict the opportunity for individual students to develop basic concepts and motor skills

____Each student gets many successful/appropriate practice trials

A. Students have 10 or more successful practice trials at an appropriate level of difficulty
I. Students have less than 10 practice trials; students successful but not at an appropriate level of difficulty
M. Students have fewer than 10 practice trials; are not successful because task is not at appropriate level of difficulty

____Moderate to vigorous physical activity is included

A. More than 20 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity is included
I. Less than 20 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity is included
M. Ten minutes or less of moderate to vigorous physical activity is included

____Each student is physically active at least 50% of total class time

A. Involves students in activities that allow them to remain continuously active; smooth transitions
I. Students are active for 50% of total class time
M. Activity time limited by having students wait in line for a turn (i.e. in relay races), limited equipment, or inappropriate games of elimination

____Small sided group games are used rather than whole class games

A. Team size is limited to 2 or 3 students per team
I. Team size is limited to 4 to 5 students per team
M. Children participate in full sided games (class divided in half or into 4 teams)

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School_____Grade_____ Time In_____ Time Out_____ Date_____

Instruction

____Lesson objective is clearly stated, reasons provided

A. Stated, repeated; written and in view of all; expectations clear - restated
I. Stated but not posted; expectations clear
M. Neither stated nor posted

____Instruction is concise

A. Clear, short, simple; promotes student success; appropriate to meet varied characteristics of students; promotes engagement; appropriate to lesson objective
I. Clear, short, simple; appropriate to lesson objective
M. Long lecture; not appropriate to lesson objectives

____Information provided is correct and important

A. Correct and timely information about skill development and activity; consistently provided
I. Correct and important information is given for activity; some opportunities missed
M. Incorrect, inappropriate, and/or unnecessary information given

____Information is linked to other learning

A. Connections to learning consistently provided; impact student achievement; linked to other areas
I. Activity linked to other learning; some opportunities missed
M. No evidence of learning connections

____Feedback is appropriate and related to cues of lesson

A. Powerful, positive, specific and/or corrective information pinpoints student success; no opportunities missed
I. Positive, specific and/or corrective information promotes student success; some opportunities missed
M. Feedback is ineffective, incorrect, or not evident

____Language is inclusive; stereotyping remarks/sarcasm avoided

A. Inclusion is obvious in all written and spoken information; is inclusive in nature and intentional
I. Stereotypical language is avoided
M. Language identifying gender, skill level, etc. is used and/or sarcasm is evident

____Obvious progression in lesson, lesson appears part of a larger progression

A. Student achievement is connected to past, present, and future learning and/or performance
I. Student performance is facilitated by prior achievement that is developmentally appropriate, sequential, and prepares them for future learning, some opportunities missed
M. No evidence of progression or prior learning

____Cues for performance are highlighted

A. Critical elements of performance are stated, written; observable and repeated by students
I. Correct critical elements of performance are stated and emphasized
M. Critical elements of performance are not evident or are incorrect

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School_____Grade_____ Time In_____ Time Out_____ Date_____

(Instruction continued)

____Demonstrations for skills/drills/games are provided

A. Demonstrations are concise, accurate, appropriate, and repeated when necessary for student achievement
I. Demonstrations are accurate and appropriate
M. Demonstrations are incorrect, inappropriate, and/or not evident

____Safety highlighted (emotional & physical)

A. Critical elements for safe performance are written, stated, consistently reinforced and contribute to the welfare of all students
I. Critical elements for safe performance are stated, not posted or posted, not stated; some opportunities for reinforcement are missed
M. Critical elements for safe performance are not stated or reinforced

____Learning reviewed/tomorrow previewed/compliments are given

A. Critical elements reviewed, individuals within group comprehension checks used; positive evaluation of student achievement given, and relationships to future learning stated
I. Evidence of closure: learning reviewed/ tomorrow previewed, compliments given
M. No evidence of closure

____Encouragement provided for activity outside of class

A. Positive recognition for student physical activity at home and in the community; family involvement encouraged
I. Students reminded of opportunities for physical activity outside of class and school
M. No mention or recognition

____Evidence that learning is taking place - accountability systems evident

A. Student successful performance of critical elements is demonstrated in a variety of ways
I. Student's successful performance of critical elements is demonstrated
M. No accountability system in place to determine individual student achievement

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